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**NATIONWIDE ZOGBY POLL: MAJORITY OF AMERICANS BELIEVE  
THE KILLING OF WHALES IS WRONG**

*-- With International Whaling Commission Meetings in Portugal Kicking Off, Animal Planet Gauges Americans' Knowledge of Whaling Debate --*

(June 22, 2009, New York, New York) – Animal Planet today released the results of a national Online Zogby Interactive poll of 3,412 Americans to coincide with the 61<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission. The survey -- commissioned by Animal Planet, the producers of **WHALE WARS** -- was intended to assess Americans' knowledge of and attitudes towards whaling as the IWC meets to discuss scientific research, conservation, economic trends, infractions and welfare issues.

An overwhelming majority (85%) of Americans surveyed know that the act of whaling is still in existence today while less than 3% believe it does not exist. Slightly more than half (53%) said it is not ethically or morally right to kill whales, with 20% disagreeing and 27% unsure. The poll coincides with the second season of Animal Planet's **WHALE WARS**, an 11-part environmental adventure series following Captain Paul Watson and his crew in their attempts to halt whaling activities in the Antarctic, which began June 5.

Other interesting results from the Poll:

More than half of those surveyed (57%) said they believe whales are an endangered species with nearly a third (31%) not sure. In fact, blue, fin, sperm and humpback whales are endangered, while minke and gray whales are not considered at risk.

A majority (68%) surveyed said they believe Japan engages in whaling. In fact, as seen in **WHALE WARS**, Japan hunts minke and sperm as part of their cetacean research program. Whaling is a legal active practice in various parts of the world for indigenous peoples, but a majority (68%) said they believe Japan as a country engages in the act of whaling. The poll respondents also cited other countries that engaged in whaling, including Iceland (25%) and Norway (25%). Russia (36%) was also cited; however, that country does not actually practice whaling, except for allowing it among indigenous peoples in the far-east region of the country.

Regarding the reasons for whaling, a small percentage (13%) surveyed said that scientific research – the purpose cited by the Japanese – is the leading factor. More than half believe that whales are being used as a food source (56%) and for oils and fragrances (51%). Japan, Norway and Iceland do package and sell whale meat as a food source (Norway and Iceland mostly sell to the Japanese market). Although the production of oils and fragrances from whale blubber was a major motivation for whaling in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, whale blubber is rarely used for such today. Some (20%) also incorrectly believe the act of killing whales is a sport.

When asked what organization is doing the most to stop whaling, more than half (54%) surveyed were not sure. Greenpeace had the highest percentage (29%) among the organizations cited. Only a small percentage (5%) said they thought The Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, the organization featured on **WHALE WARS**, is doing the most to stop whaling.

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